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COINS EVALUATION #6  
78-0159

28 JAN 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Information Handling Committee

SUBJECT : CIA Position on Coins

1. CIA favors continuation of the current test phase until 31 March as originally planned. After that time, CIA will actively participate in the evaluation of experience gained thus far and in considering ways to overcome deficiencies which have been surfaced.

2. Major deficiencies in the present system are already apparent:

a. The files presently available on COINS do not reflect CIA user interest or needs. In fact, COINS as it exists is of no value to the CIA current intelligence analyst (who can be supposed to have the greatest need for on-line access) and it is of very marginal value to CIA analysts engaged in longer term research.

b. The present configuration of multi-computers, query languages and file formats is unsatisfactory to users, slow in response, needlessly complex, overly expensive, and it magnifies security problems. Indeed, CIA believes that continued efforts to promote analyst use of the present system will prove counterproductive, as, in this Agency, the weaknesses of the system have tended to discourage its use.

3. CIA is willing to continue participation in the present system after 31 March for a period of up to six months if the Community desires to continue exercising the system during the evaluation phase. CIA expects that within a period of six months following 31 March, firm conclusions will have been reached regarding the requirement for a Community on-line system. If it is concluded that there is a requirement, then the evaluation should also provide judgments regarding systems modification, file requirements, and recommendations for resolving security problems.

CIA Member, IHC

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